

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

ANDRE ANTROBUS,

Plaintiff,

-against-

NEW YORK CITY; CITY HALL;  
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS;  
UNNAMED EMPLOYEES;  
CORPORATION COUNSEL,

Defendants.

23-CV-7038 (LTS)

ORDER TO AMEND

LAURA TAYLOR SWAIN, Chief United States District Judge:

Plaintiff, who is currently incarcerated in the George R. Verno Center on Rikers Island, brings this *pro se* action under 42 U.S.C. § 1983, alleging that Defendants violated his constitutional rights. By order dated August 11, 2023, the Court granted Plaintiff's request to proceed *in forma pauperis* (IFP), that is, without prepayment of fees.<sup>1</sup> For the reasons set forth below, the Court grants Plaintiff leave to file an amended complaint within 60 days of the date of this order.

**STANDARD OF REVIEW**

The Prison Litigation Reform Act requires that federal courts screen complaints brought by prisoners who seek relief against a governmental entity or an officer or employee of a governmental entity. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(a). The Court must dismiss a prisoner's IFP complaint, or any portion of the complaint, that is frivolous or malicious, fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted, or seeks monetary relief from a defendant who is immune

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<sup>1</sup> Prisoners are not exempt from paying the full filing fee even when they have been granted permission to proceed IFP. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(1).

from such relief. 28 U.S.C. §§ 1915(e)(2)(B), 1915A(b); *see Abbas v. Dixon*, 480 F.3d 636, 639 (2d Cir. 2007). The Court must also dismiss a complaint if the Court lacks subject matter jurisdiction. *See* Fed. R. Civ. P. 12(h)(3).

While the law mandates dismissal on any of these grounds, the Court is obliged to construe *pro se* pleadings liberally, *Harris v. Mills*, 572 F.3d 66, 72 (2d Cir. 2009), and interpret them to raise the “strongest [claims] that they suggest,” *Triestman v. Fed. Bureau of Prisons*, 470 F.3d 471, 474 (2d Cir. 2006) (internal quotation marks and citations omitted, emphasis in original). But the “special solicitude” in *pro se* cases, *id.* at 475 (citation omitted), has its limits – to state a claim, *pro se* pleadings still must comply with Rule 8 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, which requires a complaint to make a short and plain statement showing that the pleader is entitled to relief.

Rule 8 requires a complaint to include enough facts to state a claim for relief “that is plausible on its face.” *Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007). A claim is facially plausible if the plaintiff pleads enough factual detail to allow the Court to draw the inference that the defendant is liable for the alleged misconduct. *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009). In reviewing the complaint, the Court must accept all well-pleaded factual allegations as true. *Id.* But it does not have to accept as true “[t]hreadbare recitals of the elements of a cause of action,” which are essentially just legal conclusions. *Id.* (citing *Twombly*, 550 U.S. at 555). After separating legal conclusions from well-pleaded factual allegations, the Court must determine whether those facts make it plausible – not merely possible – that the pleader is entitled to relief. *Id.* at 679.

## **BACKGROUND**

The following facts are drawn from the complaint, in connection with events occurring from July 1, 2022, through July 14, 2023. (ECF 1.) Plaintiff alleges that Defendants: (1) violated

his “religious rights” by denying him razors, which he needs to “cut [his] underarm, pubic and etc. hairs so [he] can perform [his] religious offerings”; (2) “blocked” and “open[ed]” his mail; (3) seized “favorable exonerating evidence”; (4) “attack[ed] and spray[ed] him” without cause, and paid other detainees to assault him. (*Id.* ¶ V.) Plaintiff mentions correction officers in the complaint, but he does not list them as defendants in the caption of the complaint. Plaintiff asserts that he needs a “court appointed lawyer.”<sup>2</sup> (*Id.*) Named as Defendants are New York City, City Hall, the New York City Department of Correction (“DOC”), and Corporation Counsel. Plaintiff seeks money damages. (*Id.* ¶ VI.)

## DISCUSSION

### A. Section 1983

To state a claim under 42 U.S.C. § 1983, a plaintiff must allege both that: (1) a right secured by the Constitution or laws of the United States was violated, and (2) the right was violated by a person acting under the color of state law, or a “state actor.” *West v. Atkins*, 487 U.S. 42, 48-49 (1988).

#### 1. Religious freedom claim

The Court construes Plaintiff’s allegation that correctional staff violated his “religious rights” as asserting claims under the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment and under the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (“RLUIPA”).

The Free Exercise Clause protects individuals from “indirect coercion or penalties on the free exercise of religion [by government officials], not just outright prohibitions.” *Lyng v. N.W. Indian Cemetery Protective Ass’n*, 485 U.S. 439, 450 (1988). For a Free Exercise claim, the question at the pleading stage is whether the plaintiff has alleged facts showing that the

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<sup>2</sup> Plaintiff renewed the request by letter dated August 22, 2023. (ECF 5.)

“defendant[] significantly interfered with [the plaintiff’s] religious beliefs.” *McEachin v. McGuinnis*, 357 F.3d 197, 203 (2d Cir. 2004); *Jones v. Goord*, 435 F. Supp. 2d 221, 256 (S.D.N.Y. 2006) (noting that, in this Circuit, “a claim of ‘significant[ ] interfere[nce] with . . . religious beliefs’ is sufficient to state a constitutional claim.”) (quoting *McEachin*, 357 F.3d at 203) (alterations in original)). There may, however, “be inconveniences so trivial that they are most properly ignored.” *McEachin*, 357 F.3d at 203 n.6.

Under RLUIPA, the government may not “substantial[ly] burden” an institutionalized person’s religious exercise unless the burden furthers a compelling governmental interest by the least restrictive means.<sup>3</sup> *Jova v. Smith*, 582 F.3d 410, 415 (2d Cir. 2009). RLUIPA provides institutionalized persons with “greater protection” to exercise their religious beliefs than the First Amendment. *Holt v. Hobbs*, 135 S. Ct. 853, 862 (2015) (“RLUIPA’s ‘substantial burden’ inquiry asks whether the government has substantially burdened religious exercise . . . , not whether the RLUIPA claimant is able to engage in other forms of religious exercise.”). A “substantial burden” is one that places “substantial pressure on an adherent to modify his behavior and to violate his beliefs.” *Singh v. Goord*, 520 F. Supp. 2d 487, 498 (S.D.N.Y.2007) (citing, *inter alia*, *Jolly v. Coughlin*, 76 F.3d 468, 477 (2d Cir.1996)). Inconvenience alone is insufficient to establish a substantial burden. *Id.* (citing *Westchester Day School v. Vill. of Mamaroneck*, 379 F. Supp. 2d 550, 557 (S.D.N.Y. 2005)).

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<sup>3</sup> RLUIPA does not provide for monetary damages against state officials sued in their official capacities. *Sossamon v. Texas*, 563 U.S. 277, 293 (2011). And the Second Circuit has held that RLUIPA does not create an implied private right of action against state officials sued in their individual capacities. *Washington v. Gonyea*, 731 F.3d 143, 145 (2d Cir. 2013) (per curiam). Thus, under RLUIPA, an incarcerated person may only seek injunctive relief against a state official.

Plaintiff alleges that correctional staff denied him razors, which he needs to “cut [his] underarm, pubic and etc. hairs so [he] can perform [his] religious offerings.” (ECF 1 ¶ V.)

Plaintiff does not state what his religious faith is, how long he has been unable to shave, and how the denial of access to razors actually affected his ability to “perform . . . religious offerings,” or otherwise exercise his faith. Plaintiff’s allegations are therefore insufficient to state viable claims under the First Amendment or RLUIPA. The Court grants Plaintiff leave to amend his claims to allege facts suggesting that correctional staff violated his right to practice his religion.

## 2. Interference with mail claims

The Court liberally construes Plaintiff’s claims that Defendants interfered with his mail as arising under the First Amendment. A prisoner’s First Amendment rights encompass the right to “adequate, effective and meaningful” access to the courts and to the free flow of incoming and outgoing mail. *Bounds v. Smith*, 430 U.S. 817, 822 (1977); *Davis v. Goord*, 320 F.3d 346, 351 (2d Cir. 2003). “[C]ourts have consistently afforded greater protection to legal mail than to non-legal mail, as well as greater protection to outgoing mail than to incoming mail.” *Davis*, 320 F.3d at 351 (citing *Thornburgh v. Abbott*, 490 U.S. 401, 413 (1989)).

Plaintiff’s allegations concerning his mail implicate both an access-to-courts claim and a general mail tampering claim.

### a. Access-to-courts claim

Prisoners have a “constitutional right of access to the courts [that] gives rise to a number of derivative rights, including the right to access legal materials to prepare a case, and the right of indigent inmates to be provided with paper and pens to draft legal documents and stamps to mail them.” *Collins v. Goord*, 581 F. Supp. 2d 563, 573 (S.D.N.Y. 2008) (citing *Bounds*, 430 U.S. at 824-28). Protecting these rights “requires prison authorities to assist inmates in the preparation

and filing of meaningful legal papers by providing prisoners with adequate law libraries or adequate assistance from persons trained in the law.” *Bourdon v. Loughren*, 386 F.3d 88, 92–93 (2d Cir. 2004) (internal quotation marks and citation omitted). Assistance from prison authorities, however, is “only the means for ensuring a reasonably adequate opportunity to present claimed violations of fundamental constitutional rights to the courts.” *Lewis v. Casey*, 518 U.S. 343, 351 (1996) (internal quotation marks omitted).

To state a claim for denial of access to the courts, a plaintiff must allege facts showing that the defendant’s conduct: (1) “was deliberate and malicious,” and (2) “resulted in actual injury to the plaintiff such as the dismissal of an otherwise meritorious legal claim.” *Davis*, 320 F.3d at 351 (internal quotation marks omitted); *see also Christopher v. Harbury*, 536 U.S. 403, 415 (2002). To demonstrate actual injury, a plaintiff must allege: (1) a valid underlying cause of action separate from the right-of-access claim; and (2) frustration or hindrance of the litigation caused by the defendant’s actions. *See Harbury*, 536 U.S. at 415. A mere “delay in being able to work on one’s legal action or communicate with the courts does not rise to the level of a constitutional violation.” *Jermosen v. Coughlin*, 877 F. Supp. 864, 871 (S.D.N.Y. 1995) (citing *Jones v. Smith*, 784 F.2d 149, 151–52 (2d Cir. 1986)). Furthermore, when a prisoner with appointed counsel claims that prison officials hindered his efforts to defend himself or pursue other legal claims, “he must show that, on the facts of his case, the provision of counsel did not furnish him with the capability of bringing his challenges before the courts.” *Bourdon*, 386 F.3d at 98.

Here, Plaintiff is a pretrial detainee with pending criminal proceedings. He does not allege any facts suggesting that he is pursuing a “nonfrivolous, ‘arguable’ underlying claim” that has been hindered as a result of delays, withholding, or opening of his mail. *Harbury*, 536 U.S. at

415. Furthermore, even if Plaintiff, who is presumably represented by counsel in his pending criminal case, is pursuing a meritorious legal issue arising from his criminal proceedings, he does not allege any facts explaining why his counsel would be unable to assert the claim on his behalf. *See Bourdon*, 386 F.3d at 98. Because Plaintiff does not allege the existence of a valid nonfrivolous underlying cause of action, and he does not explain why his defense attorney could not raise any arguments in his criminal case, he fails to state an access to courts claim under the First Amendment. The Court grants Plaintiff leave to provide facts in an amended complaint that support an access to courts claim.

b. Mail tampering claim

To state a claim based on general mail tampering, a plaintiff must allege that the incidents: (1) suggest an ongoing practice of censorship unjustified by a substantial government interest, or (2) have unjustifiably chilled the prisoner's right of access to the court or impaired his legal representation. *Davis*, 320 F.3d at 351. "[A]n isolated incident of mail tampering is usually insufficient to establish a constitutional violation." *Id.* at 351-52. As few as two incidents of mail tampering, however, may constitute a First Amendment violation if indicative of "regular" and "unjustifiable" interference with a prisoner's mail. *Id.* at 351; *see Washington v. James*, 782 F.2d 1134, 1139 (2d Cir. 1986).

Plaintiff does not allege enough facts to suggest that Defendants interfered or tampered with his mail in a manner that rises to the level of a constitutional violation. He asserts that his mail was "blocked" and "open[ed]" (ECF 1, ¶ V), but he does not state when, how often, or by whom his mail was blocked or opened. To the extent Plaintiff is alleging that his mail was opened or delayed, he alleges no facts suggesting that these actions were the result of unjustified government censorship or tampering. Plaintiff's allegations do not suggest that Defendants

subjected him to regular and unjustifiable interference with his mail or that such interference affected his ability to access the courts. Moreover, Plaintiff does not name as defendants the individual DOC officers whom he alleges interfered with his mail.

The Court grants Plaintiff leave to file an amended complaint naming as defendants the individual DOC officers whom he alleges violated his rights and alleging additional facts sufficient to state a Section 1983 access to the court or mail tampering claim. For an access-to-the-court claim, Plaintiff must allege facts suggesting that he was hindered from pursuing an arguably meritorious legal claim for which he is not represented by counsel. In support of a mail tampering claim, he must allege facts indicating that named defendants subjected him to regular and unjustifiable interference with his mail.

### 3. Property claim

A claim for deprivation of property is not recognized in federal court if the relevant state court provides a remedy for the deprivation of that property. *See Hudson v. Palmer*, 468 U.S. 517, 533 (1984); *Marino v. Ameruso*, 837 F.2d 45, 47 (2d Cir. 1988) (citations omitted). In New York state, “the availability of an action in the Court of Claims provides [an] adequate post-deprivation remedy for prisoners who claim deprivation of personal property by prison officials.” *Jones v. Harris*, 665 F. Supp. 2d 384, 401 (S.D.N.Y. 2009) (describing procedure available to state prisoners). Thus, “even the intentional destruction of an inmate’s property by a prison officer does not violate the Due Process Clause if the state provides that inmate with an adequate post-deprivation remedy.” *Little v. Mun. Corp.*, 51 F. Supp. 3d 473, 499 (S.D.N.Y. 2014) (identifying that New York state law provides pretrial detainees with an adequate post-deprivation remedy, that is, Section 9 of the Court of Claims Act).



Plaintiff alleges that unspecified persons have “seiz[ed] . . . favorable exonerating evidence.” (ECF 1, ¶ V.) To the extent he seeks damages for the loss of property, he fails to allege facts demonstrating that his available state remedies are in any way inadequate. *See Butler v. Castro*, 896 F.2d 698, 700-04 (2d Cir. 1990). Plaintiff’s claim concerning the loss of his property is therefore dismissed for failure to state a claim. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B)(ii).

#### 4. Excessive force claim

Plaintiff’s alleges that DOC employees sprayed him with a chemical agent, and paid other detainees to assault him. The Court construes these allegations as asserting an excessive force claim under the Fourteenth Amendment. *See Edrei v. Maguire*, 892 F.3d 525, 533 (2d Cir. 2018). To state such a claim, a plaintiff must allege facts showing that a correction officer engaged in an “exercise of power without any reasonable justification in the service of a legitimate government objective.” *Id.* (citation omitted); *see also Kingsley v. Hendrickson*, 576 U.S. 389, 396-97 (2015) (noting a pretrial detainee asserting an excessive force claim must show only that the force used against him was objectively unreasonable and is not required to prove the defendant’s subjective intent, as has been required in cases involving convicted prisoners).

Plaintiff indicates that DOC employees “sprayed” him for no reason, and directed other detainees to assault him (ECF 1 ¶ V), but he does not provide any facts explaining what occurred, when the incidents occurred, or who was involved. The Court grants Plaintiff leave to state more facts regarding this claim because, without more, the Court cannot determine whether Plaintiff states a claim on which relief may be granted. Plaintiff should also name as defendants the individual DOC officers whom he alleges assaulted him and unlawfully infringed on his religious freedom.

## **B. The Named Defendants**

### **1. City Hall, Department of Correction and Corporation Counsel**

Plaintiff's claims against City Hall, DOC, and Corporation Counsel must be dismissed because agencies of the City of New York are not entities that can be sued. N.Y. City Charter ch. 17, § 396 ("[A]ll actions and proceedings for the recovery of penalties for the violation of any law shall be brought in the name of the city of New York and not in that of any agency, except where otherwise provided by law."); *Jenkins v. City of New York*, 478 F.3d 76, 93 n.19 (2d Cir. 2007); *see also Emerson v. City of New York*, 740 F. Supp. 2d 385, 396 (S.D.N.Y. 2010) ("[A] plaintiff is generally prohibited from suing a municipal agency.").

## **C. City of New York**

When a plaintiff sues a municipality under Section 1983, it is not enough for the plaintiff to allege that one of the municipality's employees or agents engaged in some wrongdoing. The plaintiff must show that the municipality itself caused the violation of the plaintiff's rights. *See Connick v. Thompson*, 131 S. Ct. 1350, 1359 (2011) ("A municipality or other local government may be liable under this section [1983] if the governmental body itself 'subjects' a person to a deprivation of rights or 'causes' a person 'to be subjected' to such deprivation." (quoting *Monell v. Dep't of Soc. Servs. of City of New York*, 436 U.S. 658, 692 (1978))); *Cash v. Cnty. of Erie*, 654 F.3d 324, 333 (2d Cir. 2011). In other words, to state a Section 1983 claim against a municipality, the plaintiff must allege facts showing (1) the existence of a municipal policy, custom, or practice, and (2) that the policy, custom, or practice caused the violation of the plaintiff's constitutional rights. *See Jones v. Town of East Haven*, 691 F.3d 72, 80 (2d Cir. 2012); *Bd. of Cnty. Comm'rs of Bryan Cnty. v. Brown*, 520 U.S. 397, 403 (1997) (internal citations omitted).

Plaintiff does not present facts showing that a municipal policy, custom, or practice caused the violation of his constitutional rights. The Court grants Plaintiff leave to file an amended complaint to provide facts in support of a municipal liability claim against the City of New York.

**D. Motion for counsel**

The factors to be considered in ruling on an indigent litigant's request for counsel include the merits of the case, Plaintiff's efforts to obtain a lawyer, and Plaintiff's ability to gather the facts and present the case if unassisted by counsel. *See Cooper v. A. Sargenti Co.*, 877 F.2d 170, 172 (2d Cir. 1989); *Hodge v. Police Officers*, 802 F.2d 58, 60-62 (2d Cir. 1986). Of these, the merits are "[t]he factor which command[s] the most attention." *Cooper*, 877 F.2d at 172. Because it is too early in the proceedings for the Court to assess the merits of the action, Plaintiff's motion for counsel is denied without prejudice to renewal at a later date.

**E. State law claims**

A district court may decline to exercise supplemental jurisdiction of state law claims when it "has dismissed all claims over which it has original jurisdiction." 28 U.S.C. § 1367(c)(3). Generally, "when the federal-law claims have dropped out of the lawsuit in its early stages and only state-law claims remain, the federal court should decline the exercise of jurisdiction." *Carnegie-Mellon Univ. v. Cohill*, 484 U.S. 343, 350 n.7 (1988).

Because Plaintiff has been granted leave to file an amended complaint, the Court will determine at a later stage whether to exercise its supplemental jurisdiction of any state law claims he may be asserting. *See Kolari v. New York-Presbyterian Hosp.*, 455 F.3d 118, 122 (2d Cir. 2006) ("Subsection (c) of § 1367 'confirms the discretionary nature of supplemental jurisdiction by enumerating the circumstances in which district courts can refuse its exercise.'" (quoting *City of Chicago v. Int'l Coll. of Surgeons*, 522 U.S. 156, 173 (1997))).

### LEAVE TO AMEND

Plaintiff proceeds in this matter without the benefit of an attorney. District courts generally should grant a self-represented plaintiff an opportunity to amend a complaint to cure its defects, unless amendment would be futile. *See Hill v. Curcione*, 657 F.3d 116, 123-24 (2d Cir. 2011); *Salahuddin v. Cuomo*, 861 F.2d 40, 42 (2d Cir. 1988). Indeed, the Second Circuit has cautioned that district courts “should not dismiss [a *pro se* complaint] without granting leave to amend at least once when a liberal reading of the complaint gives any indication that a valid claim might be stated.” *Cuoco v. Moritsugu*, 222 F.3d 99, 112 (2d Cir. 2000) (quoting *Gomez v. USAA Fed. Sav. Bank*, 171 F.3d 794, 795 (2d Cir. 1999)). In light of Plaintiff’s *pro se* status, the Court grants Plaintiff 60 days’ leave to amend his complaint to detail: (1) the religious freedom claim; (2) the mail/access to court claim; and (3) the excessive force.

Plaintiff is granted leave to amend his complaint to provide more facts about his claims. First, Plaintiff must name as the defendant(s) in the caption<sup>4</sup> and in the statement of claim those individuals who were allegedly involved in the deprivation of his federal rights. If Plaintiff does not know the name of a defendant, he may refer to that individual as “John Doe” or “Jane Doe” in both the caption and the body of the amended complaint.<sup>5</sup> The naming of John Doe defendants, however, does *not* toll the three-year statute of limitations period governing this action and Plaintiff shall be responsible for ascertaining the true identity of any “John Doe” defendants and amending his complaint to include the identity of any “John Doe” defendants

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<sup>4</sup> The caption is located on the front page of the complaint. Each individual defendant must be named in the caption. Plaintiff may attach additional pages if there is not enough space to list all of the defendants in the caption. If Plaintiff needs to attach an additional page to list all defendants, he should write “see attached list” on the first page of the amended complaint. Any defendants named in the caption must also be discussed in Plaintiff’s statement of claim.

<sup>5</sup> For example, a defendant may be identified as: “Correction Officer John Doe #1 on duty August 31, 2023, at Sullivan Correctional Facility, during the 7-3 p.m. shift.”

before the statute of limitations period expires. Should Plaintiff seek to add a new claim or party after the statute of limitations period has expired, he must meet the requirements of Rule 15(c) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. In the “Statement of Claim” section of the amended complaint form, Plaintiff must provide a short and plain statement of the relevant facts supporting each claim against each defendant. If Plaintiff has an address for any named defendant, Plaintiff must provide it. Plaintiff should include all of the information in the amended complaint that Plaintiff wants the Court to consider in deciding whether the amended complaint states a claim for relief. That information should include:

- a) the names and titles of all relevant people;
- b) a description of all relevant events, including what each defendant did or failed to do, the approximate date and time of each event, and the general location where each event occurred;
- c) a description of the injuries Plaintiff suffered; and
- d) the relief Plaintiff seeks, such as money damages, injunctive relief, or declaratory relief.

Essentially, Plaintiff’s amended complaint should tell the Court: who violated his federally protected rights and how; when and where such violations occurred; and why Plaintiff is entitled to relief.

Because Plaintiff’s amended complaint will completely replace, not supplement, the original complaint, any facts or claims that Plaintiff wants to include from the original complaint must be repeated in the amended complaint.

### **CONCLUSION**

Plaintiff is granted leave to file an amended complaint that complies with the standards set forth above. Plaintiff must submit the amended complaint to this Court’s Pro Se Intake Unit within 60 days of the date of this order, caption the document as an “Amended Complaint,” and

label the document with docket number 23-CV-7038 (LTS). An Amended Civil Rights Complaint form is attached to this order. No summons will issue at this time. If Plaintiff fails to comply within the time allowed, and he cannot show good cause to excuse such failure, the complaint will be dismissed for failure to state a claim upon which relief may be granted.

The motion for counsel is denied without prejudice.

The Court certifies under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a)(3) that any appeal from this order would not be taken in good faith, and therefore IFP status is denied for the purpose of an appeal. *Cf. Coppedge v. United States*, 369 U.S. 438, 444-45 (1962) (holding that an appellant demonstrates good faith when he seeks review of a nonfrivolous issue).

SO ORDERED.

Dated: October 10, 2023  
New York, New York

/s/ Laura Taylor Swain

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LAURA TAYLOR SWAIN  
Chief United States District Judge

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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

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Write the full name of each plaintiff.

\_\_\_\_ CV \_\_\_\_  
(Include case number if one has been assigned)

-against-

**COMPLAINT**  
(Prisoner)

Do you want a jury trial?  
☐ Yes ☐ No

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Write the full name of each defendant. If you cannot fit the names of all of the defendants in the space provided, please write "see attached" in the space above and attach an additional sheet of paper with the full list of names. The names listed above must be identical to those contained in Section IV.

**NOTICE**

The public can access electronic court files. For privacy and security reasons, papers filed with the court should therefore *not* contain: an individual's full social security number or full birth date; the full name of a person known to be a minor; or a complete financial account number. A filing may include *only*: the last four digits of a social security number; the year of an individual's birth; a minor's initials; and the last four digits of a financial account number. See Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 5.2.

**I. LEGAL BASIS FOR CLAIM**

State below the federal legal basis for your claim, if known. This form is designed primarily for prisoners challenging the constitutionality of their conditions of confinement; those claims are often brought under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 (against state, county, or municipal defendants) or in a “*Bivens*” action (against federal defendants).

☐ Violation of my federal constitutional rights

☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**II. PLAINTIFF INFORMATION**

Each plaintiff must provide the following information. Attach additional pages if necessary.

First Name	Middle Initial	Last Name
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State any other names (or different forms of your name) you have ever used, including any name you have used in previously filing a lawsuit.

Prisoner ID # (if you have previously been in another agency’s custody, please specify each agency and the ID number (such as your DIN or NYSID) under which you were held)

Current Place of Detention

Institutional Address

County, City	State	Zip Code
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**III. PRISONER STATUS**

Indicate below whether you are a prisoner or other confined person:

☐ Pretrial detainee

☐ Civilly committed detainee

☐ Immigration detainee

☐ Convicted and sentenced prisoner

☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_



**IV. DEFENDANT INFORMATION**

To the best of your ability, provide the following information for each defendant. If the correct information is not provided, it could delay or prevent service of the complaint on the defendant. Make sure that the defendants listed below are identical to those listed in the caption. Attach additional pages as necessary.

Defendant 1:

First Name	Last Name	Shield #
Current Job Title (or other identifying information)		
Current Work Address		
County, City	State	Zip Code

Defendant 2:

First Name	Last Name	Shield #
Current Job Title (or other identifying information)		
Current Work Address		
County, City	State	Zip Code

Defendant 3:

First Name	Last Name	Shield #
Current Job Title (or other identifying information)		
Current Work Address		
County, City	State	Zip Code

Defendant 4:

First Name	Last Name	Shield #
Current Job Title (or other identifying information)		
Current Work Address		
County, City	State	Zip Code

## V. STATEMENT OF CLAIM

Place(s) of occurrence: \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) of occurrence: \_\_\_\_\_

## FACTS:

State here briefly the FACTS that support your case. Describe what happened, how you were harmed, and how each defendant was personally involved in the alleged wrongful actions. Attach additional pages as necessary.

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**INJURIES:**

If you were injured as a result of these actions, describe your injuries and what medical treatment, if any, you required and received.

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**VI. RELIEF**

State briefly what money damages or other relief you want the court to order.

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**VII. PLAINTIFF'S CERTIFICATION AND WARNINGS**

By signing below, I certify to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief that: (1) the complaint is not being presented for an improper purpose (such as to harass, cause unnecessary delay, or needlessly increase the cost of litigation); (2) the claims are supported by existing law or by a nonfrivolous argument to change existing law; (3) the factual contentions have evidentiary support or, if specifically so identified, will likely have evidentiary support after a reasonable opportunity for further investigation or discovery; and (4) the complaint otherwise complies with the requirements of Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 11.

I understand that if I file three or more cases while I am a prisoner that are dismissed as frivolous, malicious, or for failure to state a claim, I may be denied *in forma pauperis* status in future cases.

I also understand that prisoners must exhaust administrative procedures before filing an action in federal court about prison conditions, 42 U.S.C. § 1997e(a), and that my case may be dismissed if I have not exhausted administrative remedies as required.

I agree to provide the Clerk's Office with any changes to my address. I understand that my failure to keep a current address on file with the Clerk's Office may result in the dismissal of my case.

Each Plaintiff must sign and date the complaint. Attach additional pages if necessary. If seeking to proceed without prepayment of fees, each plaintiff must also submit an IFP application.

Dated _____		Plaintiff's Signature _____
First Name _____	Middle Initial _____	Last Name _____
Prison Address _____		
County, City _____	State _____	Zip Code _____

Date on which I am delivering this complaint to prison authorities for mailing: \_\_\_\_\_